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MAXIMS AND SAYINGS OF FATHER PAUL GINHAC, S.J.

FATHER PAUL GINHAC, S.J.

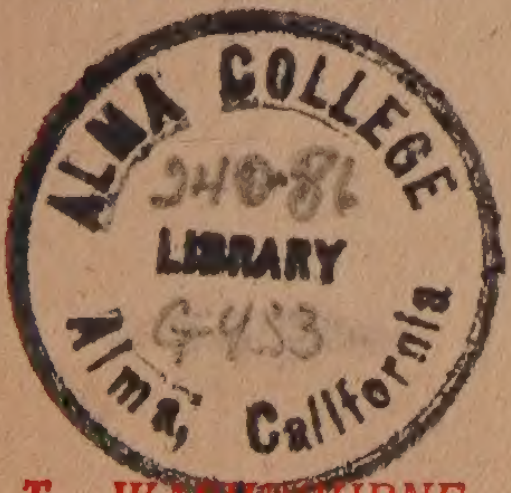
Born at Le Mazel, Serverette, France, May 31, 1824 ; died at Castres, in the odour of Sanctity, January 10, 1895.

Through whose intercession hundreds of wonderful favours have been granted.

The Angelus Series

MAXIMS & SAYINGS OF FATHER PAUL GINHAC S.J.

"A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART"



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PREFACE

Father Paul Ginhac, S.J., was born at Le Mazel, Serverette, in the south of France, on May 31, 1824. At the age of nineteen, having led a gay and careless life, he was instantly converted by a miraculous glance from a crucifix, which was being carried in procession through the streets of Mende, at the close of a Mission, and on January 4, 1843, entered the Society of Jesus at Avignon.

Master of Novices, and Superior of the Tertian Fathers in the novitiates of the Society for forty years, Father Ginhac

had few opportunities of attracting the attention of a world which is quickly won by the charm of holiness. He died as he lived, generously fighting the hard battle of self-conquest to the end, but practically unknown even in his native land of France, except to the numerous communities of priests and nuns, whom the silent preaching of his example had urged along the path of perfection more powerfully than his burning words.

Death, however, seemed to lift the veil which had so long concealed this hidden saint, and God glorified His Servant. An immediate demand was made for the publication of his life,

which in a few years has run through five French editions, and translations have been issued in seven other languages. Numberless miraculous favours have been obtained through his intercession.

Saints, like poets, are supposed to be born, not made, but Father Ginhac was a striking exception to this rule. A glance through his life will show that his sanctity was no gratuitous gift from God, but laboriously hewn out of the rough, coarse block of our corrupt human nature.

From the day when the great crucifix of the Cathedral of Mende gave him the "look" which changed his heart, Paul Ginhac,

the young, dashing, pleasure-loving man of the world, put before him as his one ideal " to know Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," his sole ambition to reach the heights of sanctity. It was a long, desperate struggle for fifty-three years. What it cost him the Heavenly Master only knows; but when at last, on January 10, 1895, the wearied soldier laid down his arms at the feet of his Divine King, one who knew him well could write: " I can say with truth that I have met one saint at least in my life, one who in every respect fulfilled all that I had ever read about the greatest saints placed by the Church on our altars."

MAXIMS AND SAYINGS
OF
FATHER PAUL GINHAC, S.J.

To give souls entirely to God ought to be the sole ambition of a priest.

✠

Remember that you are the object of an infinite love. We must ever bear in mind God's love for us. We must believe it firmly and constantly. It is this belief in the love of God that has made saints.

✠

The more one tries to live intimately united to Our Lord Jesus Christ, the more one can

benefit others, because, in this way, one becomes in God's hands a docile instrument for the designs of His infinite mercy.

✠

Truly God Our Lord has made the work of our sanctification very easy—He asks only that we do for Him the work of the present moment, without any care as to the future. We worry incessantly about the future; this is a great temptation, and not a whit more reasonable than it would be to desire to live two hours at once.

✠

Let not the thought of your past infidelities sadden your

heart, or weaken your confidence. Our Lord is infinitely merciful, and you should believe that, in His marvellous goodness, He has blotted out every stain.

Never forget how He loves you, and that in His Sacred Heart you have wherewith abundantly to satisfy for every debt.

✠

Oh, my dear child, love, love Our Lord and His Blessed Mother! Fly from sin! When the demon tempts you to do evil, throw yourself into the arms of your good Mother, hide yourself under her maternal mantle.

O my God, in order to repulse every temptation to fear or uneasiness at the thought of my approaching death, I place my whole being in Thy hands by an act of entire confidence and perfect abandonment to Thine infinite mercy.

I accept with humble gratitude all the pains and sorrows it will please Thy goodness to send me, looking on them as the greatest pledge of Thine infinite tenderness.

✠

He who hesitates about rising promptly in the morning at the first signal will never rise beyond mediocrity. In comparison with the great sacrifices Our Lord expects from

us, what is it to get up instantly at the first sound of the bell?

✠

If I give myself entirely to the Divine King, He will take care of me; I may leave all to Him and let Him act. I trust myself to a neighbour, to a friend; does not my Divine King merit the same confidence? Oh, in what a profound peace I could pass my life; and yet I get agitated and troubled! Total abandonment to Our Divine King.

✠

Let us do each action as if the salvation of a whole nation

depended on it—nothing by halves. It is not necessary always to turn the conversation directly on holy things, but at least let people ever feel that we are men of high ideals.

✠

Ah ! may God deliver us from these *half-wills* (the first and second of the Three Classes), from those men of the " happy medium " who will and do not will, who will a certain thing, but not everything; that is the greatest scourge in religion, and one might say in the Church.

✠

To work with the Divine King, for the Divine King, like

the Divine King, is the whole secret of the saints. Should we not be touched to the quick at seeing the small number of those who serve Our Lord, and who serve Him so badly ?

✠

On the mission, in the midst of an infidel people, one must suffer before one can preach.

✠

When the Sovereign Pontiff speaks, we must obey with our eyes shut.

✠

Since so many nations still sit in the shadow of death, we must believe either that they

are deaf to the invitations of the Divine King, or else that Our Lord is at fault. . . . No, the Divine King is not in fault; He does not delay. . . . Amongst so many souls called to the apostolate, how many there are who do not respond to the call! And amongst those who respond, are there not some who hesitate to go to the north, or south, for love of the Divine King? Are there not some who, in going, seek their own interests when they reach the posts confided to them? Are there not some who, after a time, must be recalled, or who, if they remain, become a trouble to their superiors?

Father Paul Ginhac, S.J.

We must refuse pleasure to self, not shirk trouble, unpleasantness or disagreeable things. Oh, if we possessed the instinct of our own interests, like people of the world, what enormous profit we should gain each day! . . . by avoiding these little inconveniences which cannot harm me, I tread under foot real diamonds.

✠

Fervent souls, when well directed, give God more glory and do more good to others than a multitude of tepid souls.

✠

Had I all the riches, all the pleasures, and all the glory, of

this world, how happy should I be to offer all to Thee! All for Jesus! He is all mine, all for me! I will live no longer for self, but all for the glory of my Divine Chief, and, if such be His good pleasure, I will go before kings and peoples to preach the names of Jesus and Mary.

✠

You will conquer the world, the demon, and the flesh in others, in proportion to the number of defeats they will have suffered in your own soul. If you have not conquered them in yourself, and you try to attack them in others, they will laugh at you.

Father Paul Ginhac, S.J.

There is no work more crucifying to Nature, more meritorious in the eyes of God, or more hateful to the demon, than prayer. Our enemy is ever striving to withdraw us from it; it is towards this that all his efforts are directed, persuaded as he is that no one is so powerful as a man of prayer, and that without it there is no advancement in perfection.

✠

It seems to me that when I shall have given up all by the three vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, I shall receive as my reward Jesus Christ Himself, and that He will say to me: " Behold, I am here; I wish to

be thy riches, thy delight, thy glory, and thy liberty." What a thought that is! O precious treasure! O blessed delight! O incomparable glory! For the little that I give I receive an infinity! What must heaven be, if already my Jesus gives Himself entirely to me!

✠

God sent you this work, or this worry, in order to make you advance in virtue. God is treating you as He treats the fields. You know that, when the labourers see the land well watered by a gentle but heavy rain, they cry out: "What a grand day!" Thus

God acts towards you in sending you all these little worries.

✠

I should wish to see Le Mazel become, under your care, a veritable house of God, one in which He would be loved above all things, and in which work was done solely for His sake; a house in which no word was ever spoken except of things relating to His interests, and, oh, how blessed it then would be! Content, joy, happiness, every blessing, would be showered down upon it in abundance.

✠

Desire to suffer everything for Our Lord. Aspire even to

martyrdom; long for the conversion, not of one soul, but of the whole world. If the field is restricted by obedience, it is because our strength is limited, but desire should know no limit.

✠

God alone! To wish for nothing but God, to attach oneself only to God, that is grand, that is glorious!

✠

There is one infallible way to persevere: if we do not wish to fail, we must make progress, and always try to do better. Without this the will slackens, and little by little we descend.

Agere contra, Vince teipsum, Exire a propria utilitate—were constantly on his lips, with an energy terrifying to nature, if the love of Jesus did not come to its aid. "If you love Him," he would say, "you will be happy in this way of the Cross; you will walk in it with energy, and you will persevere. Love, and everything will be possible for you."

✠

I will frequently offer myself, and those who are making the Retreat, to Our Divine Lord, especially during my visits to the Blessed Sacrament. I will make them pray much, a thing of the utmost importance, and

which I think won for us the success of the first week of the Exercises.

✠

Death—I shall die! Accept death in order to accomplish the Will of God, to give Jesus Christ's life for life, to live with Christ, to offer to God the sacrifice of myself and of my all, and to have eternal merit; to quit this body of sin, this sinful earth, where sin reigns, and where one is always exposed to the danger of sinning.

✠

For a Christian, for a religious above all, the day one quits this world is the day of days, because then the soul,

freed from every danger, enters into the possession of the Sovereign Good, from Whom she is never more to be separated. Long with all your heart for that great day, and rejoice when you see it near at hand.

✠

I asked him what was the best preparation to make for death. He replied without any hesitation: "The habitual exercise of love." I asked for an explanation, and he said: "To transform our thoughts, our words, our actions, our work, into acts of love, and that by the will, which always depends on ourselves, whilst feeling does not."

I must carry my cross, and carry it every moment of the day, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls; I must imitate Our Lord and His Blessed Mother so as to beget Jesus Christ in every novice, in every soul. All in the Cross and by the Cross, nothing without the Cross !

✠

You have been long in the service of Our Divine King, our well-beloved Saviour Jesus Christ, our All. As you advance, your heart becomes more loving and devoted in the eternal bonds you have sworn Him; you feel more and more how good it is to have left all things

and oneself for love of Our Lord. Make daily progress in the spirit of devotedness and self-sacrifice, for the sake of Our Divine Master.

✠

Until the end of time Our Lord must be on the Cross in the person of His ministers, and in them continue the great sacrifice of Calvary. Happy those who are called upon to share the fate of this Divine Master. Nothing is of any value unless marked by the sign of the Cross.

✠

How insincere are certain confessions! One accuses oneself

of a breach of silence, of not having swept one's room, etc. Why not, before everything else, accuse ourselves of our mediocrity? That is *the* great sin!

Do not accuse yourselves of any fault unless you are fully determined to avoid it in future. One confesses; the same faults occur again; there is no amendment. Why is this? Because we do not cure the real evil. We should consider the cause of these faults, their principle, the inordinate affection from whence they spring, and subdue that.

✠

If you wish to work efficaciously for the glory of God,

hide yourself; remain hidden. He, who lives a life hidden in God, gains everything, influences everything. Xavier, Paul, . . . carried with them everywhere the foundation of the hidden life; there lay their strength.

✠

Let us meditate chiefly with the heart. To do that, let us love Our Lord. When one loves, words do not fail. Consequently, let us have no will but God's will; let us will simply and sincerely all that He wills, and as He wills it; let us will nothing but what He wills, and hate that which He hates. May Our Lord give us

a new will, may He create in us a new heart, may He give us His own Heart. When He asks for our hearts, *Præbe, fili mi, cor tuum mihi*, it is that He may give us His. We must, in fine, do everything from our hearts.

✠

Courage! Rise generously above the revolts of Nature; we must attain perfection; God wishes it; He will assist you. You fight along with Our Lord and under the eyes of the Blessed Virgin; fear nothing. Be large-hearted, be constant, so as to make better reparation for yourselves and for others.

A great number remain in mediocrity because they wish to act alone. They are not open with Superiors.

✠

Do not forget that the greatest service you can render to your brethren is the example of a regular life. Let us help one another to practise the rules. The Society could not receive a greater service from you; and she will value this proof of your love more than any other.

✠

Do nothing that is not from a supernatural motive.

The perpetual youth of the Society is due to the Exercises, and if, by the greatest of misfortunes, the spirit of the Society should be lost, it would be sufficient, in order to recover it, that a Jesuit should make the Long Retreat again. When you have seriously gone through the Exercises, you will tell me if they do not come from the Heart of Jesus, and if they do not lead back to that same Sacred Heart.

✠

The thought of the Mother of God habitually accompanied him to the altar. He used to beg her to " purify his hands, inflame his heart, and give him the same sentiments as she

had at the moment of the Incarnation, and at the foot of the Cross on Calvary."

✠

If I do God's Will, I shall do much even if I did nothing. God can make up for everything.

✠

Grant, O my God, that for my acts of charity I may receive only pain and confusion, that everything here below may turn against me. With the help of Thy grace I wish never to say a word, or even make a gesture, of excuse.

✠

Learn to mortify natural curiosity. Do not read at once a

letter received; leave it for a little while on your table. This is a habit to be gained, for otherwise, later on, one is overcome by curiosity, instead of remaining master of oneself.

✠

We must understand that, as long as we do not work at complete self-renunciation, we are only losing our time.

✠

A Jesuit has nothing but his crucifix. If words will do as a souvenir, a few, well understood, suffice to make us saints. Remember that all things pass, but that Our Lord never passes. Everything may fail you—

health, success, esteem, and affection of men—you may even need bread, but Our Lord will never fail you—never !

✠

Humility is very easy: you must put yourself at once in nothingness and a little lower.

✠

What we should constantly ask from our Divine King is joy, of which we have an immense need if we are to advance steadily. Doubtless we shall have difficulties; we cannot always walk in the same path; but nothing can, nothing should sadden a religious—neither sickness, nor failure, nor humiliations, nor temptations.

Even should it be said that we are saints, what does that matter ?

✠

We must strive to look on ourselves as an *enemy* who is not to be spared.

✠

In union with the offering made to the Divine Majesty by the Sacred Heart at the moment of the Incarnation, on the Cross and in the Eucharist, I offer myself in union with the Blessed Virgin Mary, in order that the most holy Will of God be fulfilled in me every instant, as perfectly as possible, through the motive of the most pure love.

I will always dwell in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, at each respiration renouncing positively everything displeasing to them, and wishing to embrace everything that is agreeable to them.

✠

On coming into this world, Mary wished to live in complete poverty, spotless purity, and perfect obedience.

This is what one ought to propose to oneself on entering the Society, this is what we should desire each time we celebrate the birth of Mary, or when one is called to superiority : complete detachment, not alone from all passing things,

but from every affection outside of God. One should desire, not only to deny every satisfaction to the senses, but even to crucify them, and to do God's Will with one's whole heart, as manifested by the Rule and by Superiors. This, O my Mother, is the detachment I desire, and which I beg you to obtain for me.

✠

Give to each exercise the time necessary to acquit yourself well of it. God created that particular time for the execution of your work. To give it five minutes less than you should is to steal five minutes from God. These thefts are of no advantage.

At times religious are inclined to complain of the want of something or other in the house. Because Our Lord treats His own royally, we are unconsciously inclined to be exacting towards Him.

✠

We find many who pray, many who mortify themselves, many who labour, many who receive the Sacraments, many who perform works of mercy, but few who surrender themselves completely to Our Lord.

✠

That which makes an apostle is an ardent love of Our Lord

Jesus Christ. That love has three principal effects:

First.—To give one's heart to Jesus Christ, without any reserve.

Second.—To give to Jesus Christ souls, every soul, the whole world.

Third.—To offer oneself as a perfect holocaust, to endure every species of suffering, humiliation, mortification, every kind of martyrdom, so as to render Him greater glory and gain more souls for Him.

✠

Any work should help a religious to find Jesus Christ in the interior of his soul. It is

necessary, and it is possible, since it is our vocation.

✠

Exterior mortification is only the first step, but he who has not dared to take that step will only weary himself in the wrong path. People may imagine that mortification is good only for the chastisement of the body. That is an illusion; it is a secret power which conquers spiritual pride.

✠

I will renounce my own will in order to do God's Will in all things, and I pray that this Divine Will may be perfectly accomplished here below. This was Our Lady's desire when

she said her *Ecce ancilla Domini*.

✠

O happy sufferings, which unite you more and more closely to Our dearest Lord, which increase His love in you, and which prepare for you unspeakable joys! Look upon all you suffer as a martyrdom, which Our Saviour gives you grace to bear for the glory of His name. Suffer with all a martyr's courage.

✠

Should we spend the entire hour of meditation in desolation and powerlessness, we ought to feel grateful and happy. Is it not a great favour from

God to get another hour of life, and an hour spent in His presence?

✠

Universal self-denial ought to be the delight of a soul which knows Our Lord.

✠

Show yourself very faithful to grace, and work with all the ardour of your soul at the continual immolation of self under all its forms. Nothing useless in thoughts, in affections, in words, in movements. Be heart and soul for the things of God. Refer everything to Him; never forget His Divine presence. Let there be no human respect;

mortify those little natural sallies with one's companions; as much as possible repress what is merely natural—nature always seeks to come forward; let your first impulses, as far as you can, be those of grace. In all this love Our Lord with a great and ever-increasing love; pray much, and finally keep an unshaken hope in your heart.

✠

We should constantly, and with all our strength, tend towards the most intimate and complete union with God. Our own life must totally disappear. The shortest means of attaining union is the forgetfulness

of self and the love of Our Lord, Who is at the same time the supreme End of this union.

✠

Henceforth I will do all through love, praying, acting, speaking, suffering, and dying, from a motive of love, in union with my Divine Saviour consummating on the Cross His bleeding sacrifice.

✠

Your mission is to combat interior foes, and to reduce them to powerlessness by means of prayer, the practice of virtue, and the continual offering of yourself to Our Divine Saviour.

To-day, more than ever before, the Church and the Society require men of heart; but it is not possible to be a man of heart if the Model and King of all hearts does not give Himself to us, and, in a certain measure, become our heart.

✠

When once the saints of the Society had said, "*I will*," it was done.

✠

A generous soul will have no difficulty in walking in the path of sacrifice or that of labour, nor in climbing with her King even to the summit of Calvary

There is a certain amount of affectation in your words and in the turn of your phrases. Come, my dear child, let us be simple, like Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel. This simplicity will help us to acquire humility, and will make prayer easier.

✠

Assuredly it is better for our dear one to be free from the miseries of this life, and to enter without delay into the ineffable joys of Paradise. He is not lost to us; only the sensible presence of our loved one has been taken for a time, but, please God, we shall see him again, and then it will be to share his happiness for ever.

Even now he is not quite gone from us; we have, besides the example of his irreproachable life, the help of his prayers and his intercession before the throne of the Most High.

✠

The surest, the best, the most fruitful, as well as the sweetest, means of denying self in all things, is to love.

✠

You all desire to imitate Our Lord. You should therefore desire to have the worst of everything, even in rooms. If you receive the worst, rejoice and be glad. Thank Our Lord for it. If, on the contrary, the

best falls to your lot, accept it of course from Him, but consider yourself as the worst off.

✠

I promise you, my own dearest sister, that I will not forget you at the holy Altar. I bless you now and every day that you live, but above all in the last moment of your life, and until you reach your place in Paradise. There you will love Our Lord for me, as well as for yourself, and for others who do not love Him.

✠

Contradictions well borne are most advantageous, because they detach us from created

things, keep us in humility, increase our confidence in God, and strengthen the bonds of charity.

✠

Be generous with God; do everything at your ease. When there is question of God, of our Mass, of our Breviary, let us take plenty of time; one does much when one does well. The time spent in praising God is not to be regretted.

✠

The apostolate of travelling is more difficult now than it was formerly. We separate too quickly. A good plan would be to pray for those who get

in and out of the carriage; to adore the Blessed Sacrament in the towns and villages by which we pass or that we may see; to ask light and strength for all baptized souls who are living there and not thinking of God. Who knows how many souls we might save in this way, instead of remaining idly watching the view.

✠

One should only wish for what God wills, even though it be a tranquil death in one's bed, if He desires it.

✠

Often look at your *crucifix*, the sight of your crucified

Saviour will give you strength to suffer. Often look at the *tabernacle*, where dwells the Divine Physician, waiting to heal our ills. Look up to *heaven*, where we shall one day be reigning in glory.

✠

Above all, my dear child, confidence in the infinite goodness of Our Lord. Certainly He is with you, and He helps you greatly; He will assist you still more powerfully if you have more confidence in Him.

✠

In your prayers ask for saints; they are God's instruments for the salvation of nations.

Father Paul Ginhac, S.J.

We must condemn ourselves to death once for all, and then execute ourselves every day.

✠

There is nothing which so pleases the Divine Heart and gives greater glory to God, in this life and in the life beyond, than crosses borne with and in Our Lord.

✠

Our Lord wishes to give you the gift of His Cross, His Heart, and His Love. Ah! plunge into the ocean and let the Divine Master act: all will come right. . . . A thousand blessings.

Occupy yourself more with Our Lord, and your faults will cease of themselves.

✠

I cannot bear that you should deliberately lower the standard of your spiritual life, and that you should limit yourself to something more moderate or mediocre. The Divine King does not wish it.

✠

They may take our houses from us, but they can never take Our Lord Jesus Christ, if we wish to keep Him in our hearts.

Father Paul Ginhac, S.J.

When you have a sermon to preach, let your first and principal care be generously to put in practice yourself the virtue on which you are to speak, or try to imprint in your own heart the dispositions you wish to imprint in the hearts of your audience. We should preach to ourselves, penetrate ourselves deeply with the subject, and make it altogether ours, before we preach to our neighbour, and the latter's change of life will depend on the change in ourselves.

✠

There is nothing so profitable to us as suffering; it purifies us more and more, and detaches

us from self; it furnishes us with occasions for practising the highest virtue, and merits for us an immense degree of glory for all eternity. Nothing is more advantageous for the souls of our brethren and for the Church, because God cannot refuse to hear the prayer of a soul in sorrow and humiliation for love of Him.

✠

Modesty is no trifling matter. It means the perfection of our body, which is an essential part of our human nature; it means edifying our neighbour, and glorifying in our person Jesus Christ, our Divine King.

There are people in the world who will make us blush before the tribunal of God by their heroic mortification.

✠

Oh ! to be humble and to suffer, to forget self and all created things for love of that Heart, which loves to the very end !

✠

How happy are they who give their lives in testimony of their faith and loyalty to Our Lord and His Church ! We can scarcely hope for such a grace. I know I am totally unworthy of it, although I ask it every day during Holy Mass. But

there is the testimony of daily martyrdom, which we all can and ought to render to our Divine King: the continual dying to ourselves, in order to accomplish yet more perfectly all that God wills from us. May this martyrdom be ours !

It is from the point of view of eternity that we should study things in order to judge of them aright; and then we see that everything here below is dross, unless it lead to God.

To love Our Lord and to cause Him to be beloved ought to be the one desire of our

hearts, the only occupation of our lives, in order that the Divine Saviour may be more loved, blessed, and eternally glorified by us and by the souls whom we shall have helped to give themselves entirely to Him.

✠

Happy he who finds the Cross, embraces it with his whole heart, and attaches himself to it, there to live and die.

✠

As we advance towards the day of eternal peace in the bosom of God Our Lord, our joy and our love should increase.

Is it necessary for me to recall what you already well know, that this infirmity comes from God Our Lord, and is an effect, as well as a mark, of His great love for you, and that by His grace He will strengthen you to bear your sufferings with patience ?

✠

There is nothing for me to do but to throw myself into the arms of God, and cast all my misery, which is far greater than I can understand, into the ocean of His mercy. The Sacred Heart of Jesus will be my refuge and my hope. If I am an abyss of misery, It is an abyss of mercy and grace,

and even my wretchedness is another reason for hope. I know that I am continually offending Him, but I also know that He loves me always. There is a struggle between my miserable heart and the adorable Heart of Jesus: on one side my frightful misery, on the other the Infinite mercy of His Sacred Heart. I well know that victory will not be mine. I know that I shall be conquered; glory to the Divine Heart!

✠

Do not trouble about the spiritual exercises, which you cannot now perform. God sees your desire. Offer Him your

weariness and pain, that is the best prayer that you can make, and thus you will exercise yourself in the true spirit of prayer.

✠

After a certain humiliation, I felt tempted to answer nothing in future when questioned during the spiritual conferences, but later on I saw that this was the effect of self-love, and self-love must be destroyed at any price. The best and simplest way is to keep in the background as much as possible.

✠

It is a great grace to be called to follow the Divine King and

to imitate Him by working in His service; but how much greater a grace it is to be called to participate a little in the sorrows of His cross !

✠

Fervour constantly maintained is a martyrdom.

✠

Take care never to separate prayer from the spirit of sacrifice.

✠

In order to have solid foundation for confidence, one must begin by believing that one can do nothing, that one knows nothing, that one is worth

nothing. . . . But, in the presence of the future, we are afraid; having had experience of our weakness, we tremble when there is question of making a resolution, and these fears paralyze our generosity. Show me a religious who gives himself to Our Lord, without condition, without reserve, without calculation, and I affirm that all his fears will disappear.

✠

It is quite possible not to lose sight of God in the midst of distracting occupations; first, implicitly, by having the intention of referring every action to Our Lord. Secondly, ex-

plicitly, and that in two ways: the first, less perfect, when love frequently recalls the thought of the object beloved; the second, which is truly perfect, when love, becoming more intense, fixes continually in the soul the image of the Beloved, so that, without losing sight of Him, one can still bring to what one does for Him, and under His Divine eyes, the attention necessary. Love, then, and the problem is solved.

✠

Why is it that our meditations are so often cold and sterile? It is because we meditate with the mind and imagina-

tion more than with the heart. In mental prayer it is especially necessary that the heart should work, otherwise there will be little fruit gained.

I have realized, first, that I must undertake nothing, do nothing, say nothing, without first consulting God. Secondly, I must, after the example of Father Balthazar Alvarez, see in the necessities of my neighbour occasions for enriching my own soul with precious treasures; because the more we seek to help others, the more God gives Himself to us. Thirdly, in each action I must not lose sight of God, but know

how to keep my mind and heart united to Him. In prayer I must treat earnestly of the interests of souls, which are Our Lord's own interests.

✠

By prayer one avoids idleness and dissipation; one preaches by example, because it gives edification. By prayer one will be able to speak with authority and spiritual profit.

✠

Come what may, dear Lord, my heart will be always Thine.

✠

A venial sin is committed in a community, . . . and they

continue to act as they had acted beforehand: they eat, drink, and laugh. And what about jealousy for God's interests? An angel should come down from heaven, or a soul should leave Purgatory in order to teach us what venial sin is!

✠

One must sanctify oneself. Everything else is nothing.

✠

That prayer is to be suspected which does not produce virtue and self-mastery.

✠

My God, if it is Thy will, never give me any consolation;

for Thy glory I renounce it even to the end of my life. Give sweetness to others, who would know how to profit by it; I would only misuse Thy favours. Keep me in Thy love; that is sufficient for me.

✠

I have resolved to offer myself for the foreign mission, if such be God's Will. Therefore I accept beforehand all that could cause me pain, and I renounce from the depths of my heart everything that would bring me satisfaction.

✠

The world can never sufficiently despise a creature who has despised God!

Let me only be faithful, the less I can do, the more will God do.

✠

I am going to begin the Exercises, quite determined, I believe, with the help of grace, to draw fruit from them. The principal fruit will be to raise my thoughts and enlarge my heart, so that, dilated by love, I may be generous with God and live in a holy familiarity with Him, full of charity towards my neighbour, making myself all things to all. With regard to myself, may I entirely forget my own interests for the glory of God and the spiritual good of my brethren.

You should take the greatest care that the exercitants do not make an ordinary retreat, but really go through the Exercises of St. Ignatius, *exercising themselves*. This point is most important if you wish to make them true Christians, and thus renew the world through the Spiritual Exercises.

✠

After performing the Exercises, begin your work like one who is sure of having made a good retreat. In this way Our Lord will supply what is needful.

✠

The Exercises are not intended to be made for eight

or thirty days only, but one should continually try to express them in one's life.

✠

I have understood what it is that makes a good Superior: the being closely united to God, from Whom comes one's authority, Whose instrument and minister one is, and for Whom one acts; constant devotion to the interests of one's brothers and fellow-beings, serving them continually and without exception, having no interests but those of Our Lord. Every duty of a Superior can be reduced to these three things.

Is there not much self-love, much hidden pride and human respect, in my feelings with regard to the charge of Superior ? If I really do dread superiority, is it not, perhaps, because I fear the trouble, the suffering, the want of success ?

✠

One finds many Superiors who flatter; indeed, there are few who do not do so—not, of course, through any evil motive, but for fear of paining their subjects; had we less self-love they would act otherwise.

✠

As Superior I ought to be—First, just like one of my

brothers: no exception, no privileges, no peculiarity.

Secondly, I ought to be the least of all in my own eyes, so that I may look upon myself as the lowest.

Thirdly, I must be the servant of all. I am not here for myself, but for them, to do their will, not my own. I must look upon the time spent in listening to them, not as time lost, but as time well spent.

Lastly, I must expect no reward; I must rejoice if I meet with ingratitude.

✠

In becoming a Superior I become Father of souls. The

looking after the material interests of the house, the health and bodily wants of the inmates, the giving of permissions—all this is very little. One becomes Father of souls in order to lead them to perfection and union with Our Lord, to make them advance in the spirit of the Rules and Constitutions, and to regulate their external work, having in view God and the salvation of souls.

In order to attain this end there must be prayer and sacrifice; good example must be given to everyone in everything.

One must be oneself such as he would desire subjects to be, and by being all things to all

will gain all. Individual subjects should have the rules of their special charges read to them; they should be gently reproved for their faults and encouraged to speak of their souls. Would a Superior be really such who neglected to know the state of each soul? Would not that be to neglect the chief thing? One is Superior principally for the salvation of souls.

✠

Think of the Blessed Eucharist, where Our Lord Himself remains for you. You cannot actually receive Him as often as you desire, but let your heart always long to do so. Think

also of the Sacred Heart; may you possess It so that you may love It, and immolate yourself for the glory of God and the good of souls.

✠

I know that it would be sweet to you to die, so that your sorrows might end, and that you might possess our dear Lord for evermore, but, apart from the fact that there is no real good except to do the adorable will of God, it is better to suffer on here below with God's grace, for the glory of our Divine King, the good of the Church and souls, than to forfeit the always increasing merit to be thus gained. You will have

eternity to rest, to love, and to enjoy, and the eternal glory you will give to the infinite majesty of God will be in proportion to what you have done and suffered for Him here below.

✠

Nothing is simpler than death for the soul that loves Our Lord. It is like the turning of a leaf: on one side time, on the other eternity. Our life should be a continuation of supernatural acts, and when God says cease, death is the last. What are we doing during life? We are working for the glory of God, and in His own good time we shall also die for His glory; it is

only a matter of detail. No uneasiness about the past, because it is Jesus, our Friend, Who will judge it; and after having granted so many graces, He will take pleasure in granting us still more, so that the last will be the best. Therefore boundless confidence, constant love, total abandonment, and consequently complete expansion of heart.

✠

I must not allow my heart to dwell on my relations or my home. It is often too late when we realize the harm done by this natural love for one's family. Were it only on account of the time lost by letters,

visits, and family matters, which disturb our peace of mind, we should strive to forget the house of our father and mother. Jesus Christ will supply for all that.

✠

It seems to me that if I, who have received so many graces, were to aspire only to a wretched mediocrity, I should cause Our Lord more pain than the complete abandonment of many ordinary Christians. This is why I have urged myself to be His without reserve.

✠

I have resolved never more *voluntarily* to grant any satis-

faction to nature; to take no pleasure in anything without referring it to God; not to dwell on any natural pleasure I may feel in any of the necessities of life, such as sleep, food, recreation, travelling, or reading, being resolved to do all for the glory of God, even though I should feel the greatest repugnance. I well know that I have not yet reached the point of bearing everywhere and in everything the Cross of Jesus Christ, and of being treated like my Divine Master, but at least I will force myself to desire it.

✠

We leave self in three ways: (1) By descending into our own nothingness by humiliation. (2) By universal, entire, and constant charity towards our neighbour. (3) By rising above ourselves and every earthly object, through constant union with God in prayer. These three ways of leaving ourselves are signified by the very form of the Cross: it is planted in the earth; it extends to right and left; it rises towards heaven.

✠

I desire to be and to live in the Third Degree of Humility; I must be really stripped of everything, endure every kind

of pain and suffering, bear all ignominy and reproach—at least, as far as possible—and desire to be treated in that way. I must watch over myself and practise continual mortification in everything. Love alone can sustain me in this struggle, but, O my Jesus, is not this love, drawn from Thy adorable Heart, all-powerful ?

✠

I realized the immense part that Mary took in the sorrows of her Divine Son. I felt drawn to ask that holy Mother to form in me a priestly heart—that is to say, to make me really participate in the mystery of the

Cross, and to obtain an ardent love of Jesus crucified, an active, laborious love that would impel me to sacrifice everything for Him—my body and my soul, my time, my very life—with a firm will to imitate Him even to the Cross. Where the priest is, there is the Cross.

✠

I assure you that my path is a very painful one, for I am habitually deprived of light and feeling; faith alone guides me. Only three times during my life has God favoured me with sensible graces. For twenty years I have confessed daily, without any feeling of devotion;

Father Paul Ginhac, S.J.

I celebrate Mass every morning without any consolation, yet I try to give myself wholly to Our Lord, when I hold Him in my hands. Interiorly it is a constant struggle, helplessness and darkness.

✠

How visitors steal our time away! But it is God Who sends them; may He be always blessed!

✠

The work of our lives may be summed up thus: To leave ourselves and all things, to take the cross for our standard, arms, and recompense, and to attach

ourselves for ever to Jesus Christ.

✠

War against *mediocrity* was the watchword of the novitiate, and the favourite theme of his spiritual conferences.

✠

Unless we try ourselves, little good will come from trials from others, to which we can easily submit.

✠

Holiness consists not in doing wonderful things, but in doing that which we ought to do as it should be done.

At least, we can and we ought to conform ourselves by desire to the actions of the saints, and in our hearts imitate them as much as possible. We should put no bounds to the generosity of our desires.

✠

Pray much, and keep an unshaken hope in your heart.

✠

I feel I am only a useless instrument. It is in vain that I am told of the impression my words make—that it is Our Lord Who speaks—that I restore peace to souls. Alas! is it not all flattery? Or can

Our Lord make use of such a wretch without my knowing it ?

✠

It is by a special privilege and Divine vocation that you are extended on this cross.

✠

Nothing astonishes me more than to hear that my retreats do any good, because it costs me much to begin them, and very often this painful feeling lasts almost the entire retreat. I feel capable only of hindering the effects of grace in souls, and that I am wearisome and a nuisance to those who are listening to me.

Father Paul Ginhac, S.J.

By the mercy of God Our Lord we have only one fear, that of not being judged worthy to suffer something in our person for the Name of Jesus.

✠

You aspire to the Third Degree of Humility. Excellent! But first strive not to fail in charity, silence and gentleness.

✠

I have myself experienced that when people have taken an interest in me I am more active, more devoted; I ought, therefore, to take an interest in each one, particularly in those who are timid, in order to encourage them.

One should desire, not only to deny every satisfaction to the senses, but even to crucify them.

✠

The elect of Jesus Christ ought to be full of Him.

✠

How rare are truly obedient hearts !

✠

When a soul has not responded to the call of God, when she abuses grace, she no longer flies, but drags herself along painfully. She is a wounded bird, a machine, powerful perhaps, but of which the spring is broken. Never-

theless God does not abandon this soul; by an effort of His mercy, He draws some glory from it, but the original plan is not carried out.

✠

O my soul, why art thou sad? Even if I have offended my God, it ought not to be thus. There is still time to amend; once more let me cry: *Ecce nunc cœpi.*

✠

I shall put Jesus Christ in my place as Superior, giving everything into His care, that He may guard the house and the heart of its inmates.

Never fear to exceed either in politeness or humility.

✠

Put all your confidence in Our Lord Jesus Christ; in Him and by Him you will bear every sorrow, conquer every temptation, and safely reach our heavenly home.

✠

Who is capable of anything if God be not with him?

✠

We should banish all uneasiness regarding temporal affairs, because we belong to God, Who is our Father, and Who cannot

forget us if we are what we ought to be.

✠

Let us dwell in the Heart of Our Lord. Then there will be nothing of earth in our thoughts, our affections, our occupations, and we shall enjoy true happiness.

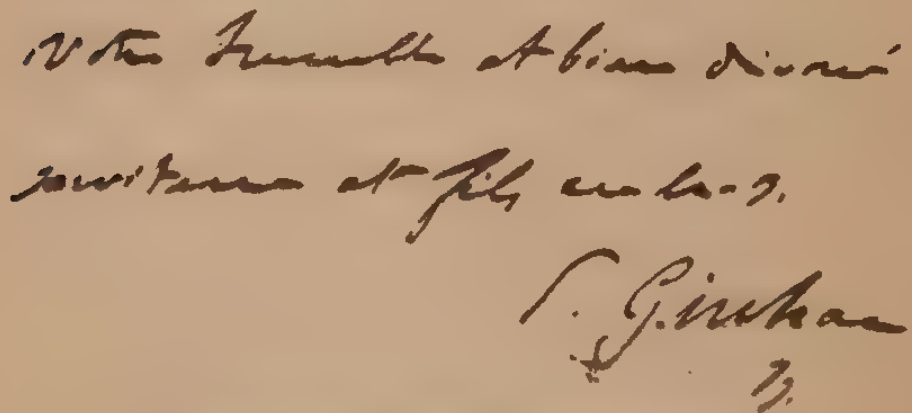
✠

The attraction, which draws you to offer yourself to the Divine Majesty as a victim of reparation, is a good one: follow it.

✠

Whatever may happen, I beg you not to get discouraged. We may commit faults—so did the greatest saints—but we

must imitate them in their repentance, and, like them, try to rise to a higher level than that from which we have fallen. . . . Above all, I recommend charity, union of hearts. Yesterday I told you to fix your dwelling-place in the Heart of Jesus; I now repeat it: there is the abode, the home, of a religious, and it is there that I leave you, with my most fervent blessing.



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